

**Good News
From New Road
St. Matthew Lutheran Church, God's Family in Service**

September 2026

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

Make me a channel of your peace, where there is hatred, let me bring your love, where there is injury, your pardon, Lord, and where there's doubt true faith in you.



Committing to a show is a lot of work, except for the fact that you're having a really good time with new found friends and doing your best to make a difference in what you are trying to bring to a performance. When I heard that Waco Civic Theatre was doing the show *Come from Away*, I knew I had to get involved in someway, so I auditioned and was blessed to be given a role in it.

For me as a Pastor getting to do a show like this is very spiritually filling. It may sound strange to say that, but the contents of the show really reflect my values as a Christian, as a Lutheran, because in the show are reflections of hospitality, love, belonging, inclusivity, and healing. The show is a reminder to me that God can even take a tragedy like the events that happened on 9/11, and bring positive elements out of it, reminding us that even amid the greatest of tragedies, God is present, and God brings healing, even when it does not seem possible.

As many of you know, I love looking for faith elements in cultural things, I find that Jesus tends to come up more in the unexpected places than the ones which we traditionally come to count on. I find that to be true in the people that I'm working with currently, the reminder of our stories, and how each one plays an integral part in God's story, because we are part of God's creation. And I find that by getting the chance to tell a story like *Come from Away*, which is based on a true story, I can also be surprised at the things that I learned and continue to learn from what people's experiences are.

The lyrics to the song above are based on a song from long ago, and our words in which I sing in the show. When I hear or see those words, wow, do I feel peace in my soul, I feel connection to not only God, but to the entire human race, and that I am called as a child of God to bring love, not hatred, to bring pardon, and not injury, to be faithful even when doubt sneaks in.

I invite you to attend one of the performances of come from away as I really believe it is a story that has the capacity to change lives. To be reminded of the strength of the human spirit, and how connections bring us together. All reflections of the love of God in our lives, brightly shown through a brilliant story that just happens to be true. Look for God everywhere you go, God always shows up in places and ways we cannot begin to imagine. This is true for me as a performer in the show, and I hope it will be true for you being part of the audience.

In Christ,

Austin Nickel

Be aware: Come from Away contains brief adult language, mild drinking, and a few suggestive or intense moments.

Below our the show dates and times.

Come From Away presented by Waco Civic Theatre
Located at 1517 Lake Air Dr. Waco, TX, 76710
Phone: 254-776-1591
Website: wacocivictheatre.com

Thursday, September 10 at 7 pm
Friday, September 11 at 7 pm
Saturday, September 12 at 2 pm and 7 pm
Sunday, September 13 at 2 pm

Thursday, September 17 at 7 pm
Friday, September 18 at 7 pm
Saturday, September 19 2 pm (St. Matt theater day out performance) and 7 pm
Sunday, September 20 at 2 pm

Thursday, September 24 at 7 pm
Friday, September 25 at 7 pm
Saturday, September 26 at 2 pm and 7 pm
Sunday, September 27 at 2 pm

Finance Update

The balance in the checking account at the end of July was \$248,039.08.

The total income for July was \$24,077.77, and the total expenses were \$35,413.08

The current overall balance for the year is \$3,081.08



WELCA NEWS

Circle of Faith Bible Study

- **Second Tuesday at 10:00** a.m. in the Church Fellowship Hall led by Nancy Zelisko
- Studying *The Cost of Nondiscipleship* by Dallas Willard
- Lunch at George's after Bible Study—talk to Kim Browne if you are interested in lunch since reservations must be made

Women Who Work Gathering

The **second Tuesday of every month from 6:30 - 8:30** come together for **Bible and Bunco Night**. Nancy Zelisko will present a devotion/study prior to the Bunco games. Snacks and drinks will be served. **Knowledge of Bunco is not necessary** in order to join in for a night of fellowship. **Contact Nancy Zelisko if you would like to attend.**

August General Meeting

Nancy Zelisko provided an informative presentation on hospice. Nancy has first hand experience on this topic because she has been an hospice nurse. **If you have any questions in the future, Nancy has offered to help you by providing answers/references/information.** It is wonderful to know that we have someone in our Saint Matthew family that can help you through difficult times. **Thank you Nancy.**

St. Matthew Showing Love To Our Neighbors

"Helping one person may not change the whole world, but it can forever change the world of the one helped. Be the reason someone smiles. Be the reason someone feels loved. Always believe in the goodness of people."

St. Matthew offers you many opportunities to show love to our neighbors. If one of these speaks to your heart, please consider supporting it. Your support is a wonderful way to show our neighbors that there is love in the world - **especially for them in their time of great need.**

Lutheran World Relief School Backpack Update

During the church service on August 23rd, **school backpacks were blessed by Pastor Austin.** These school backpacks make a difference in a child's life when they need to know that someone in the world cares about them. Their world might be one of darkness and they may have lost hope. Thank you for helping these children as they just try to survive in a very difficult time.

'We're here for a reason. I believe a bit of the reason is to throw little torches out to lead people through the dark.' — Whoopi Goldberg

Lutheran World Relief Health Kits

LWR also distributes Health Kits to disaster victims around the world including in the US. Cleanliness may not actually be next to godliness, but it certainly helps a person feel more human. When families find their homes destroyed, or must flee for their safety, soap and a towel rarely make the cut for what they can carry. Arriving in a refugee camp or other place of safety, they are scared, vulnerable and dirty from the travel. **The simple items included in a Health Kit provide much-needed self-care, critical germ fighting supplies and the chance for our neighbors in need to regain dignity amidst fear and uncertainty.** Saint Matthew **continue collecting items for the health kits in September.** Items for the health kits include:

- large sturdy comb
- toothbrush in it's packaging
- soap
- metal nail clippers
- a dark colored towel

Thank you in advance for your generosity and for showing love to our neighbors.

Caritas Food Bank

Food insecurity is a real thing for many of our neighbors. Please help if you are able by **donating food items for Caritas to distribute.** Every single can or box of food helps.

Meals On Wheels Pet Food Pantry

Many Meals on Wheels **clients have beloved pets that mean the world to them.** The **price of pet food has soared** and many don't have the money in their budget to buy it. **Please help by donating pet food.**

St. Matthew Blessing Box

Please show your love and kindness to the **neighbors** living near Saint Matthew by **contributing food items and health care items to our Blessing Box.** During hot days, **bottled water** is a great item to place in the Blessing Box because everyone needs water in this horrible heat. **As an extra treat, some flavored single serving packets to mix into the bottled water would be greatly appreciated.** Also **sunscreen lotion and bug repellant** are especially important items for those not sitting inside a building during the day. Health care items like **wipes help** during these hot days are also important. **Thank you for your generosity. It truly means so very much to those in need.**

**Fall Retreat - Love Your Neighbor As Yourself**

Be sure to **mark your calendar** for the Fall Retreat which will be **held at St Matthew October 23rd and 24th.** A **Save The Date notice** will be sent out soon. If you want to save money, register early for the early bird price. Also remember that scholarships are available. The registration form provides additional details. We are busy planning and will make sure it is a fun and informative event.

Rev. Irma Banales and our very own Rev Austin Nickel are our **key speakers** who will help us explore the answer to the question **"who is my neighbor?"**

Emily Baker of the local Isaiah 117 House will be a part of our event giving us more information about the Isaiah 117 House **including pictures and stories about the many children your clothing donations have helped.** She will also **discuss the volunteer opportunities** that are available if you would like to get more involved. This very important organization **helps children at the darkest time in their life.**

Plans include **fun times** on Friday when **Pastor Austin** will be calling out numbers for **BINGO** games. **Van Davis** will be presenting a **Chair Yoga** session on Friday. **Cate Berridge** will be presenting a **Stretching** session on Saturday. We plan on a **hands-on craft session on Saturday** where we will add dried pressed flowers into a picture frame which will show our selected Bible verse. Tables will be set up with the **Silent Auction items** and **also informative tables from organizations** like Thrivent, Isaiah 117 House, Mission Waco, Meals on Wheels, etc.

We will enjoy a **soup buffet on Friday** and a **salad buffet on Saturday** so come hungry.

**Church Office Closed**

The church office will be closed on **Monday, September 7th** in observance of the Labor Day holiday. If there is a pastoral emergency, please call the church office and follow the prompts.

First Sunday Monthly Fellowship

Please join us after worship, **Sunday, September 6th** for our regular fellowship gathering to meet with one another! September's meeting is being sponsored by the property committee.

God's Work, Our Hands Sunday

God's work our hand Sunday is **Sunday, September 13**. Be sure to wear your yellow shirts! We are partnering with the Isaiah 117 House and collecting donations for our project this year.

**Sunday School Begins
September 13th**

The Preschool Class will be studying the Book of Genesis: The Creation, Noah's Ark, and

Abraham. **The Elementary Class** will study The Word Is Preached from Bible Stories about Joash, Jonah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Esther, and Nehemiah. **The High School through Adult class-** Join us on Sundays for an intergenerational study on the book "by heart" Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism. Grab a coffee, soda, a friend or family member and meet in the back room, follow the signs. Luther's Small Catechism always included the 10 Commandments, Apostles' Creed and Lord's Prayer and builds on what Luther calls the foundations of faith. We will answer questions and discuss Luther's teaching so that when someone asks, you can confidently state why you are Lutheran. Books will be available for purchase (\$18.00) or loan from the church. Please let Eric or Nancy know if you would like a book.

St. Matthew Theater Day Out

Join us on **Saturday, September 19 at 2 pm**, as we attend a performance of Come from Away presented by Waco Civic Theatre. Pastor Austin is in the cast! Tickets are still available, contact the Waco Civic Theater or go to their website to purchase them.

**Fellowship for Single Women**

Fellowship for Single Women will be meeting **on Tuesday, September 22nd at 10:00 a.m. at Cafe Cappuccino**. We meet the **fourth Tuesday** of every month.

All singles are invited. For any questions, please contact Rosemary Fielder (fielderatwaco@aol.com)

**Coffee Fellowship is September 24**

Our next Coffee Fellowship will meet at St. Matthew in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, **September 24 from 1-3 pm**. Sign up on the podium!

Jonah Bible Study

Starting **Wednesday, October 7, at 5:30 pm** Pastor Austin will lead a Bible study on the book of Jonah. This will be a four week study and we will meet on Wednesday October 7, 14, 21, and 28. Participant books are \$5.79. Sign up on the podium if you plan to participate.



Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for your comforting prayers, kind cards and phone calls received after the loss of our husband and father, Robert L. Schuetze. Your deep faith and loving support brought true peace to our hearts during this difficult time. We are so blessed to belong to such a caring community.

The Family of Robert L. Schuetze

Thank you,
Karen Mullens

It's That Time – Norse Smorgasbord 2026

The Norse Smorgasbord 2026 is on Saturday, November 14 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church (near Clifton). The order for the ticket drawing has to be postmarked between September 5 and September 19.



If you are interested in attending, please sign-up on the sheet on the podium and make a check payable to St. Matthew Lutheran Church for \$30 for each person. Put the check in a white envelope and make sure you notate that the check is for the Smorgasbord. We will hold on to your check until we are sure our name has been drawn for the tickets. The drawing will be held on September 27, 2026.

If our name is drawn, we will discuss carpooling arrangements in October.

If you have any questions, please contact Beth Pristash.

St. Matthew 75th Anniversary Podcast

Next year in 2027, St. Matthew Lutheran Church turns 75! In getting ready for this momentous celebration, Pastor Austin is preparing to host a podcast in which St. Matthew members are interviewed about their experience with St. Matthew Lutheran Church. If you would be interested in being interviewed for the podcast, please sign up on the podium. As soon as we have a working list, we will schedule times to get together to record. Be thinking of answering the following questions,

Tell us about how you got involved at St. Matthew Lutheran Church and share your story of how and why you got involved?

What are some of your favorite memories from the past 75 years of ministry at St. Matthew Lutheran Church?

What does St. Matthew mean to you?

What are your hopes for the next 75 years of ministry at St. Matthew Lutheran Church?

Friday Quilters Meetings

Friday Quilters meet in the Fellowship Hall on Fridays at 8:30 a.m. We usually finish up around 10:30 a.m. Come join us. If you can tie a knot, you can help us assemble the quilts. We have a great fellowship time.

**Updated Directory**

Our updated directory is finally here! Make sure to grab yourself one in the gathering area if you would like a physical copy, or download a electronic copy in our weekly email!

**Flowers for the Altar**

A donation to dedicate an altar bouquet is a great way to celebrate a birthday, an anniversary or to recognize a great friendship.

Pick a Sunday on the sign-up sheet in the gathering area and then please put the \$40 in one of the envelopes available at your pew. You may either take the flowers with you after our worship service or donate them to be taken to a shut-in.

Notes for Pastor Austin

Have an idea? A prayer request? Some information that Pastor Austin could use? Feel free to leave him a note in the little black mailbox next to his office door.



Art As Worship

The Fine Arts Committee is pleased to announce the Art as Worship **theme for 2026: REST**

**COMING
SOON!**

Our **opening gala** will be on **November 7, 2026**, which means there's lots of time to respond creatively and artistically. **Please share with friends and family who might like to participate.**

Talk to Jeanne Dittmann or DeAnna Toten Beard if you have any questions.

**Prayer Requests and Concerns**

We continue to pray for one another and those close to us. If you have an update or a concern, please call the office and leave a message.

**Members with Prayer Concerns:**

Rita Bruer, Cora Gillespie, Bill Gillespie, Ty Henrichs, Jean Moeller, Stephanie Partin, Tammy Vickery, Sharon Peterson, Farrel Bolte, Florence Anderson, Denise Self, Arlene Schwarz, Leana Bond, Kathy Nordt, Ann Pierson, Doris Schuetze, and George Ahrens.

Those for whom prayer is requested:

Elizabeth Dale, John Woods, Michael Puig, Dora Torres, Hadley and her family (Beth Pristash)

Brian Thomas, Lauren Roller, Rodney & Kim Roller, Amy Roberts, Jay Edgecomb Dave Hughes (Terry Roller)

Jimmy Moore, Harold Strand, Sandy Peterson Penny Reese, Pastor Paul Krupicka (Ross & Kim Browne) Wanda Stanford, Cory Stanford, Jacen Stanford (Linda Stanford)

Vicki Terry, Duane Knudson, Hadlee Linda (Carol Linda)

Curtis Forrester (Bill & Diane Jones)

Frank Simons, Ruthie Simons, Kris Braswell, (Colleen Early)

Amy Blake, Amanda & Michael Witherspoon (Meridith Sellers)

Bryan, and Zoe Cruse (Lee & Marilyn Cruse)

"Red" Tiner Kathy Coleman, Nancy Hensel (Del & Sue Hensel)

Diana & Saul Guajardo (Ashley Jenson)

Nancy Lynch, Mary Chapa, Steve Mosley (Paula Jenson)

Werner and Gert Gstatenbauer (Roger & Betty Fornelius)

Bell Hutchings, Robbie Rash, Laura Floyd, Maisy Smith, Alisha Lee, O.C. Beasley Morgan Breedlove (Mary Herring)

Lambring & Collander Families, Ali Family, Barry Bowlin & Family (Maggie Lambring)

Reba Widmer, Roland & Sharon Krienke (Teresa Bancale)

Todd Butts (Bancale & Krienke Families)

Jose Sanchez (Nancy & Larry Zelisko)

Bryanna & Caleb Orta, Bryan (Kay Wallace)

Amy Siller (Edna Dietrich)

Noel Jones (Janice Jones)

The Bullard Family

The Family of Troy Minnick (Bradley Linda)

Jim Lawson (Sharon & Lyle Gripp)

Ron Martin, Hunter Solis (Karen Mullens)

Norm Fulmer (Mike & Vicki Bernhardt)

Pastor Paul Krupicka (Helen Henrichs)

Marcie Johnson (Karen Curtis)

David Vanderkinter (Roxann White)

September Birthdays

Karl Aho	9/07
Meghan Grip	9/07
Peggy Tooker	9/07
Robert Krienke	9/10
Dennis Kincaid	9/20
Karen Mullens	9/22
Arlene Schwarz	9/23
Bill Abright	9/25
John Jasek	9/25
Frances Wolle	9/25
Shane Owens	9/25
Tammy Vickrey	9/26
Lee Nordt	9/27
Marilyn Cruse	9/30
Cynthia Pierson	9/30

September Anniversaries

Jay & Jean Dittmann	9/03
Del & Sue Hensel	9/10
Terry & Janet Roller	9/13
Michael & Cynthia Frey	9/18
Brenda & Daylon Crye	9/26



Our **monthly newsletter deadline** is the **3rd Sunday of each month**. Please send submissions to cvanauken@grandecom.net or you may **place your handwritten information and thank you notes in the wooden box near the entrance of the workroom**. Thank you!

September 2026							Oct 2026 ▶
◀ Aug 2026	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5	
6 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am First Sunday Monthly Fellowship	7 Church Office Closed (Labor Day)	8 10:00am Circle of Faith 6:30pm – 8:30pm Women who Work	9	10	11 9:00am Quilters	12 9:00am-5:00pm <i>Calligraphy Guild</i>	
13 9:30am Worship Service – God's Work Our Hands Sunday 10:45am Sunday Learning	14	15 11:00am-4:00pm <i>Domino (42) Group</i>	16	17 9:00am Property Committee Work Morning	18 9:00am Quilters	19 2:00pm Come From Away @ Waco Civic Theater	
20 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	21	22 10:00am Fellowship for Single Women	23	24 1:00pm – 3:00pm Coffee Fellowship @ St. Matthew	25 9:00am Quilters	26	
27 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	28 6:00pm Property Committee	29	30				